

Danthonia spicata - Poa compressa Granite Herbaceous Vegetation

COMMON NAME	Poverty Grass - Canada Bluegrass Granite Herbaceous Vegetation
SYNONYM	Poverty Grass Granite Barrens
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Herbaceous Vegetation (V)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Perennial graminoid vegetation (V.A)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (V.A.5.N)
FORMATION	Medium-tall sod temperate or subpolar grassland (V.A.5.N.c)
ALLIANCE	DANTHONIA SPICATA HERBACEOUS ALLIANCE

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL 3

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM TERRESTRIAL

RANGE

Isle Royale National Park

This community is restricted to rocky summits and rocky slopes of ridges where a lot of bedrock is exposed; it is scattered throughout the park.

Globally

This association is found in Michigan and Ontario.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

Isle Royale National Park

At Isle Royale National Park, this community occupies sites on well-drained rocky ridges and slopes; usually there is a lot of exposed bedrock.

Globally

Stands occur on granite or metamorphic rocks. Soils are thin and acidic. Conditions at Isle Royale National Park, where this community is restricted to rocky summits and rocky slopes of ridges where a lot of bedrock is exposed, may be typical of the type (C. Reschke 1999). It may also occur on disturbed sites, following clearing of the natural vegetation (M. Smith personal communication).

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree canopy	<i>Picea glauca</i> , <i>Populus tremuloides</i>
Short shrub	<i>Juniperus communis</i> , <i>Amelanchier bartramiana</i> , <i>Diervilla lonicera</i>
Forb	<i>Hieracium piloselloides</i>
Graminoid	<i>Danthonia spicata</i>
Nonvascular	<i>Cladina</i> spp., <i>Xanthoparmelia</i> spp.

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CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

Danthonia spicata, *Hieracium piloselloides*, *Cladina* spp., *Xanthoparmelia* spp.

Globally

Danthonia spicata, *Hieracium piloselloides*, *Cladina* spp., *Xanthoparmelia* spp.

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

Isle Royale National Park

Poverty grass barrens is an open grassland community on rocky summits and slopes. There may be a sparse cover of trees over 5 m tall (from 0 to 20% cover); the most common trees are *Picea glauca* and *Populus tremuloides*. Tall shrubs

USGS-NPS Vegetation Mapping Program

Isle Royale National Park

may be present (from 0 to 10% cover); the most common tall shrubs are *Picea glauca*, *Amelanchier bartramiana*, and *Crataegus douglasii*. Cover of low shrubs (under 1 m tall, including dwarf shrubs) varies from 5 to 20%; the most common low shrubs are *Juniperus communis*, *Amelanchier bartramiana*, *Diervilla lonicera*, *Rosa acicularis*, *Juniperus horizontalis*, and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. Cover of herbs varies from 30 to 80%; *Danthonia spicata* is the dominant herb (15 to 40% cover), other characteristic herbs are *Hieracium piloselloides*, *Agrostis hyemalis*, *Clinopodium vulgare*, *Elymus trachycaulus*, and *Poa* spp. Cover of nonvascular plants varies from 10 to 60%; the most abundant lichens are *Cladina* spp. (reindeer lichens, 5 to 25% cover) and *Xanthoparmelia* spp. (1 to 5% cover).

Globally

The vegetation is open and dominated by graminoids. Characteristic dominants include *Danthonia spicata* and *Poa compressa*. Features at Isle Royale NP may be typical of the type. There, a sparse cover of trees over 5 m tall (from 0 to 20% cover) is found. The most common trees are *Picea glauca* and *Populus tremuloides*. Tall shrubs may be present (from 0 to 10% cover); the most common tall shrubs are *Picea glauca*, *Amelanchier bartramiana*, and *Crataegus douglasii*. Cover of low shrubs (under 1 m tall, including dwarf shrubs) varies from 5 to 20%; the most common low shrubs are *Juniperus communis*, *Amelanchier bartramiana*, *Diervilla lonicera*, *Rosa acicularis*, *Juniperus horizontalis*, and *Arctostaphylos uva-ursi*. Cover of herbs varies from 30 to 80%; *Danthonia spicata* is the dominant herb (15 to 40% cover), other characteristic herbs are *Hieracium piloselloides*, *Agrostis hyemalis*, *Clinopodium vulgare*, *Elymus trachycaulus*, and *Poa* spp. Cover of nonvascular plants varies from 10 to 60%; the most abundant lichens are *Cladina* spp. (reindeer lichens, 5 to 25% cover) and *Xanthoparmelia* spp. (1 to 5% cover) (C. Reschke personal communication 1999).

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

Isle Royale National Park

Information not available.

CONSERVATION RANK G?

DATABASE CODE CEGLO05157

MAP UNITS 38

COMMENTS

Isle Royale National Park

This community is frequently found in areas with a known history of fire, and it may represent a fairly long-lived successional community following a severe burn.

Globally

This type may arise after clearing or burning of conifer-dominated stands on rocky sites.

REFERENCES